

H. R. 40, Naturalization Bill, March 4, 1790

Enlarging the National Community

The First Congress (1789-1791) established federal procedures and criteria for foreign-born individuals to become U.S. citizens. These criteria permitted free whites of good character with two years' residence in the United States to become naturalized citizens. Congress also allowed citizens' children born outside the U.S. to be considered natural-born citizens. Over the following centuries, Congress readdressed the issue in a series of naturalization acts that sometimes excluded, but increasingly included, people of diverse races and origins.

Image Details

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